

**SPECIAL DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING
WICHITA HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MINUTES
October 22, 2001
CITY HALL, 455 N. MAIN, 10TH FLOOR-MAPD CONFERENCE ROOM
3:00 P.M.**

The special meeting of the Historic Preservation Board was held Monday, October 22, 2000, 3:00 P.M. in the Metropolitan Area Planning Department's Conference Room, City Hall-Tenth Floor, 455 N Main, Wichita, Kansas.

Members Present: Keith Lawing
Claire Willenberg
Keith Lawing
Stan Shelden

Staff Present: Kathy Morgan, Historic Preservation Planner

Intern: Shelly Berger

Speakers Kent Cox
Joe Johnson
Bob Morand
Dorian Graham
Shannon Bowem
Sharon Fearey

KENT COX: Thanks for having us; we have about a 20 to 25 minute presentation about North High. We are in the schematic conceptual design phase and we are working towards getting approval the schematic design here within the next couple of weeks from the District. With that approval, we will move into what is called the design development drawings with our goal to bid in March. Shannon has brought some receipt of what the bond issue funds as far as projects goes, we thought it would be appropriate to start with that so I will let Shannon go over that with you. Then we will go over some history of North High and then we will show you what our concepts are that we are developing.

SHANNON BOWEM: This is a one-sheet handout; we took all the information that we had gathered for North High and put this sheet together. You can see that the population of North High is about 1680, or 1650, the original constructions as you can see was built in 1929, with additions in '57, and '75. Just the philosophy and the concept for North High that was funded from the bond issue is that there are no long-term plans for major increases in enrollment at North High. Our projected design capacity will be about 1,750; about another 100 students is what our projected design capacity will be. Another concept for the school is we need to provide adequate science lab space. Right now, there are science labs with the exceptions of two spaces that are very dated. We want new science labs; also, a new journalism broadcast area, as well as general education space, and general updates throughout the building. They do need a new music suite; right now, their music suite is upstairs, and too small. We would like the Music Suite to be located with easy access to the auditorium and to the gym and the practice field. There are three different areas that we would like to have easy access to, that is very important, we want to maintain the exterior of the building to meet the historic guidelines for the local Historic Landmark. Our solution that we will review with you will show that we are adding new science labs, and new classroom space. We have located the Music Suite actually near the gym and the practice field. It is on the first level and it is an easy trip down a main corridor to the auditorium. We need to replace the existing

windows. We will be upgrading the infrastructure and replacing all of the piping; adding air-conditioning and heating to the building, replacing really everything that is there; upgrading the electrical capacity of the building as required. We will be adding about 60,000 square feet to the total of the building. You can see our budget is just over 18.7 million. Our goal is to bid this next spring, March of 2002, with the constructions complete in the fall of 2004. I believe that will be North's 75 Anniversary. We are hoping construction can be completed in conjunction with their anniversary celebration.

KENT COX: I have collected a few photographs, just to take you through what the building originally looked like as it has expanded over the years. From its original construction in the late '20s, '28, '29 when it opened, it did not change much until this photo taken in 1948. As you can see, the major addition that you see off 13th Street did not exist at that time, nor was there parking here. The auto mechanics here did not exist, the courtyard was open. They had added a couple of portable classroom by the '40s and this was essentially the basic of what we call the Historic piece to the building; the tower, the Rochester side, and the auditorium, which are significant history to our community, I think. The Minisa Bridge and the connection between the bridge and the building I think are important. We meet this group in our office last spring and talked a little bit about the view from 13th but also the connection between the bridge and the building needs to be looked at. We also have a very significant smoke stack that was originally there because of coal, but is no longer in use. In fact, it is structurally unsound and that is something that we need to look at. As far as the grounds of the building, it does not appears to me that it has changed significantly from the early days when it was first constructed. The river is about the same but one thing I did notice when we were looking at these pictures, look at those trees. I do not remember those when I was in school, I graduated in 1960. That is really pretty, all the beautiful trees along both sides of the river that did exist. Lets go to the next picture please. Then this is the picture taken in 1956, I started in 57 so you can see a few changes. Interesting in the Glen Thomas's drawings, this covered connecting walkway that goes over the two stair towers but apparently was not build until the auto mechanics area was added when that was done in the early '50s. This is the auto mechanics area; if you look real close, out here, you will see it is a different color brick than the original brick. It is substantially whiter than all the rest of the brick. Then there is another portable that has shown up, I believe that was journalism and something else that was in there. I do remember the courtyard very well during my years there and miss it a lot. You can see there is some additional construction for the gym space that was added back here. Also you can see a lot of the trees are gone that used to be there and there is a parking lot that has now developed along the west side of the riverbank. This is a 1960s one, this the year you graduated Claire, this is a year after I graduated, and you can now see there is a major addition that was added in 1956, opened in '57 for additional classroom space. Other than that, everything is similar. We are down now to two trees. What happened to the trees? Also if you notice here there is a portable classroom that I went to that were located in that location. This is a picture of how it looks today from the 1980s; it hasn't changed very much. There was a 1970s bond issue that approved construction of a new library and unfortunately, I believe, it was located in the courtyard; closed off from all the natural light on the first floor to all the classrooms. Then as you were on the second and third floors, you now look down on this immense roof that catches trash and reflects heat. It is really I think unfortunate addition, but as far as the plan goes it is in a pretty good location as far as functionality of the building, but aesthetically I miss the courtyard a lot. There is also on the far north side where some little tiny additions were added to the back for locker rooms and some of those kinds of things. As you notice throughout those years, the Rochester front and the auditorium front have been preserved. As we move into our construction, I think that that is very important for us to preserve these architectural elements' beauty so that they are not destroyed.

As we start to think about the concepts we are developing again, I think there is no more beautiful element in the Midwest than the North tower and how it connects on to the auditorium. Again, I think they are very significant and we should do nothing to ever interfere with the views of those buildings. I think the replacement of the windows that we will be doing throughout, it is going to be very important that we retain as much of the character as we can. Joe meet with you, actually during the bond issue, because one of our real concerns was exactly what would we have to do and when the replacement and I believe those of you were okay as a

committee with us replacing those with aluminum system window like we have got here. We certainly want to try to be compatible with the architecture but a window that has a thermo broken system is something that is contemporary. We just did something very similar up at Kansas State University at Seaton Hall, which is also a historical building, we replaced all of those windows. In some cases, they were put in 1880's and I think very successfully they used aluminum system, all specially designed, window-by-window. That is what we would have in mind for you.

I talked about the connection between the Minisa Bridge and the auditorium and this is, as you just come across the bridge. There is a significant tree as this is the first view you get of the auditorium. I do think that this picture as we look at the auditorium is important. As you all know one of the things we are going to change; we do have a portable classroom that are used for child development a play yard that is now developed here. We are now going to be moving those so that we will now be able to have a better connection between the bridge and 13th Street and the auditorium. I think this is, again one of the nicer elevations on the buildings, unfortunately it is hard to see with the portable classroom and the other things that have been build out there.

There is a close-up of it. This used to be kind of one of the main entrances into the complex, particularly if you were going to the auditorium, you would go through these doors. Again, we want to enhance this and open this up to make this again a more significant entrance to this part of the building. This is the view from across the river, I show this because I think we all agree that the Rochester side and 13th are beautiful, but I don't think anybody would jump up and down and say that this side is particularly attractive. And, as it's developed with the multiple additions that have taken place and there are a number of little courtyards that have quite frankly are all asphalt and have lots of trash, it is not very beautiful. As we look at our expansion, what you are going to see is that we are going to be concentrating on this area. When you look at the plan just remember what this looks like and the connection of this phase. You can also tell, if you walk around, although we sit on the river, we never know that we are on the river because you never see it, from any space other than if you would happen to be up in the mezzanine in the bowler room, you could take a look at the river. But unfortunately, all of those windows have been painted white and so you can't see it from there either. So you can never really see the river from the building. We would like to bring the river into the architecture with our solution so you would be looking at that.

This is the north side, we have ball fields that come right up to the building; as you know, the track was some of the additions that were put on with the last bond issues. We are going to be looking a possible small addition of the music suite, basically where that truck sits, again preserving this front but extending on out and maybe trying to improve this end of the building which I think have lost a little bit of their character with what happened right here.

This to me is the historically significant part of the whole complex is Jack's Hamburger Stand so we need to make sure that in all your motions that we make sure that remains.

KATHY MORGAN: How long has Jack's been there?

KENT COX: Since I can remember. I remember eating there as I was growing up.

WILLENBERG: At lease early '50s, late '40s. I know somebody we can ask.

KENT COX: I think we should replace the windows. This used to be an ice-cream store, you could get a hamburger, malt, and then you could go home. It was wonderful; I hope that we always have Jack's. Again, what we are trying to do is be respectful and celebrate the architectural heritage of the Minisa building of this building, but we also want to make sure we don't take away from that. That is everybody's judgment is what that is, but we want to be very respectful. We don't want to create an addition that looks like that, because that is

what it is. We want to create an addition that looks like it was built in the year of 2002, and be respectful of the heritage that does not take away from it. That is what we are trying to accomplish. Our original, some of our original program, this is the site plan of how it is now. We have talked a little about the existing site; we are doing a 60,000 square foot addition. That is a significant addition to the building, trying to think about where can we best do it. I think we all agree that we do not want to do anything to interfere with the Rochester elevation through you could make a case for expansion in this direction from a professional point of view and from a aesthetic point of view I do not beg to differ. I think as we come on around the auditorium, we want to preserve that element as much as we possible can. We certainly can expand to the north but we are so limited with athletic fields that with any significant expansion to the north could concur unless we could buy significant pieces of ground to the north that become a real difficult thing for us to do. We have no funding in the bond issue to acquire additional land. We are in the process of looking at some land acquisitions it would be more enhancement of the site as opposed to more than to doing a major addition. Our initial concept was looking at this being a '50s addition, it is not to be the most beautiful addition to the building but somewhat compatible I guess. We thought in terms of trying to do our construction here. I showed at my office, who else was there that day? I guess you were the only two. We have shown a pretty significant 3 story addition coming out of this direction. I think as we discussed it in the group as being to large, to big, to messy. It would destroy the view from Minisa Bridge to the auditorium. They asked us, and that being, to take a look at could we possibly expand this building on the riverbank. If you look at the picture at the riverbank, my view is that it could use some help anyway. So that is what we have been trying to do is develop those so what you will see now are those.

This is the outside as it is now developed. We are looking at the most significant expansion of this building it would be a 3-story new construction on the Westside of the complex. It will connect on to the '56 edition of the stair towers here; we will have some new stair towers at the other end. It will have connections back to the first and second floor at the boiler area. It will have significant windows so that we now can look out to the river. We will with that new construction, also we will be removing the auto mechanic piece that was added sometime in the early 50s which is actually pretty sub standard, if you go in there, both architecturally and physically. That will be removed, that will be replaced with a new industrial tech, part of our new construction with service yards. That would allow us to also open up and create a new courtyard it will be almost the same size as the original courtyard, but pushed back a little further. If you see in the plan it will also allow some of these interior spaces now totally cut off from the windows, now be able to experience the courtyard and the natural light. Particularly into the library. We will also be removing most or all of the parking that is there now along the riverbank. We will be making some aesthetic improvements I hope, we will come back and add some landscape along the river as you can see that was originally in there and is gone. We will put that back in. All or most of our service area will be brought to the back side of the building, the mechanical, our chillers, all of that equipment, the main receiving area will now be back in the northwest corner. We will also be developing another service area here. Another thing we are going to do, it is a little deviation from the original bond issue, but as we got into the design issue and looked at function, we determined that there is really a need. And that is that the cafeteria commons which used to be up on the third floor when Claire and I went to school there was moved when the ninth graders were moved into the building. To accomplish that, the old cafeteria was divided into a whole bunch of classrooms, classrooms here were removed here, and the cafeteria was moved to the first floor. The only somewhat functional is certainly not the kind of space that you get excited about and it is certainly not a place that you could go for a school dance, or prom, program or other type of functions it is really very little, old classroom spaces have been made. Our concept is to really turn that back into classroom space and then our element would be added on to the south with your permission; it is now a cafeteria commissary; a space where kids can come for eating. Of course it would be a place where we could have a program, a place where we can have school dances, something similar to what you might see at Northwest High School in the center commons area, similar to what you would also see at Southeast, West and South in their large cafeteria areas. What we are building also at East High School with their bond issue project and we are also building at Heights High with their bond issue, will be very similar to that. That will require us to move the kitchen to this location. We will need to have a new service area for the kitchen from 13th and from the river area. This will also remove the

portable that is located here, the service play yard, now creating new entrance area, offer some new parking a little small than what it is now, some unloading capabilities. It will be a really nice entranceway coming into the what used to be the original entrance. As you know once you get inside here you can go immediately to the right and you are into the auditorium. What this will do, this secondary entrance, you can go into the auditorium or you can turn left and to into the cafeteria commissary. I think it will create a real nice public function. Of course, the challenge is to design this new cafeteria commissary in a way, as I said it is recognized the architecture but doesn't try to compete with it. We want it to be attractive and functional but we don't want to compete with the architecture of the original building. The last piece that we are looking at is the music area, the band room and a vocal area on the main floor. We have looked all the way around and we really came up with a conclusion that they go several places. They go out and practice during band session almost every day, they come and get on busses and go different places and they come to the gym at both locations and play, they occasionally go down to the auditorium as you will see in the plan. Mainstream is a pretty easy way for the band to get from here as opposed to now coming down from the second floor. I also would like to improve the architecture of this corner. I think these additions area are a little substandard. I think with what we are doing here we have the opportunity to maybe complete the corner, enhance what is there now, and do it in an aesthetically fancy way.

KEITH LAWING: Kent what's the cafeteria, is that still going to be a single story?

KENT COX: (Kathy can't hear) Single story. What you are looking at you will see us developing kind of a concept of a low wall, it will only be so high on the front, with windows through it and then as you step back from that about 10 or 15 feet, then another element would stick up about 20 feet to let natural light in.

We start with the first floor, just to orient you, here is the river down here to the west, the auditorium complex that we talked about, the tower right here, the main elevation, the gym complex, the significant entrance into the auditorium, this is the infield library that was done back in the seventies. This is the connecting link; it shows up in the original design but wasn't built until some time in the late 40s or 50s, which is a connecting link between the two buildings. This is the where the auto mechanic now exists we will tear it down. There is the boiler room and some of the shop's spaces, the main gym, etc.. What you see in tan are existing spaces that we will be keeping as is or we will be doing some significant remodeling. We will be doing a significant amount of interior remodeling of the building. Again, concept is to put three new pieces on. The most noticeable will be the cafeteria commissary, the new entryway to enhance, to the auditorium or the commissary. There is a kitchen area we will be moving, service area coming off the west. The concept is kind of neat, we will be developing a lower wall, in front of a higher space, it will kind of stair step up, out to the fifth or sixth additions. We will then be turning in what is now the cafeteria, what used to be classroom, back into classroom spaces, by doing this instead of building additional classroom space; we will build a new cafeteria commons area and turn that into classroom space. This will be the second major addition for East [North]High, connecting all the classroom on the first floor, relocate some of the interior spaced to here and here and a new service area coming in on the back as well as a new elevator that will take us up and down and goes into the basement area for servicing. Right now, you have to go to the back of the building and find the old elevator to get up and down the complex. That will be right at the new service area. We struggled a lot with what to do with the library. We didn't find any major changes to improve the looks of the library; what we are proposing to do with the new court area is to open back up the original link and maybe even do more with it so students will know coming off of the court yard, and then allow the library to still have it's main entrance from the east, but actually, (general discussion I can't hear). We are also proposing to come into the center space and removing a section of the roof with a clear story to collect a lot of natural light in. These does two things for us, it improves aesthetically the interior of the library, but it also gives us something to look at now. Now you look at this enormous roof that has bottles strung all over it, will now have a piece of architecture in the center of that courtyard to look down into, as well as look on down into the library through the windows. I think this will enhance some of the space inside and it will enhance some of the spaces that are around the area. The last piece that would be added on is this music, our

concept here is to extend the lobby space on to the west, remove the very limited restrooms that are there now, and they are kind of scary to go into, we will remove those create new larger public restrooms on the lobby expansion. As you know, the lobby is quite small. This will give us a little bit of additional space here, and then we will locate our instrumental, both music complexes onto the north. They can get on to it for busses, they can get into the gym to play and they can get out for practice.

KATHY MORGAN: Is that a three-story addition also?

KENT COX: Just one.

KATHY MORGAN: So the only three stories is that, the left side?

KENT COX: That side will be three stories, these two pieces will be one story. The second floor will remain the same as it is now around the perimeter, we are doing renovations interior wise, upgrading of classrooms and so forth, but on the second floor, this will be science on the second floor again with a lots of glass windows looking at the river as well as looking at the courtyard. You can see now as you look around the second floor at the roof I can now look at this roof element, we will put the red tile on it so that it looks nice, especially when you look down into this space. The second floor, this will actually be about a story and a half high, the music room. You will have a six to eight foot ceilings, so we are probably looking about 24 foot high element connecting, to the lobby. Finally the third floor, would be leaving again the L shaped circulation space, we will be doing a little interior renovation in here to get the corridors so that it lines up, right now it kind of zigzags. What used to be the original kitchen is moved and is currently used for art. We are going to come in and move art to the first floor and then remodel this into additional classroom spaces. The third floor would extend on over, and again this would be science, looking into the courtyard, looking up the river for natural light. I did comment about art. Art is up on the third floor now, it used to be down on the first floor, we went back to the first floor, we were going to put into some of the old shop spaces that are here, and they will now have a lot of that old industrial height ceiling, they will have access to this courtyard. We can put a gas kiln, which they badly need for their program, out in the courtyard and they can access that there. So we will have two new art studios. I think we are making some real improvements to the old building. I hope we are making some aesthetic improvements to the interior and I hope you will give us permission to do additions because I personally think this can really enhance the building and I hope also that I am as sensitive as anybody to not doing anything to destroy the original architect. We are still developing this is how we built this in such a way that is compatible but that it doesn't interfere.

KATHY MORGAN: With that addition of the commons area you are still going to be able to see the backdrop out of the '56, '58 editions, whatever editions that was with the banding across the top.

KENT COX: Yes. We will create a higher volume space, they will be able to get a lot of natural light, they will pick up this kind of window pane with the clear story and we talked about if this should have sloped high roof or should it be rectangle, with a boxed. I think in the office we talked about, or we came to the conclusion that we did not want to compete with the original architecture, we did not want it to look like we were building it in the 1929, we want it to look like part of the new construction. The tile to us seemed inappropriate, I think again, when Joe looked at this, asked where is the addition, and I hoped that is how people would feel, it is hard to know actually, where the edition is. That is our concept. Again, that opening that back up with the auditorium, and addition, but that nice elevation, and what we do here came with a lot of natural glass light, down here. We have even talked a little bit more that maybe we should even make this at an angel. I think that might be kind of nice too. We are going to explore that little concept.

CLAIRE WILLENBERG: I like your screen idea, extending your curve, down to screen the service area.

KENT COX: Upstairs there are trucks coming in and out. We don't cook there like we used to so we don't generate quite the same type of service that maybe like what I went to school, but we still serve a lot of trucks.

CLAIRE WILLENBERG: Is there any security risk in putting that colonnade opening commissary out that far?

KATHY MORGAN: At one time we were talking about that parking lot, that exists now on 13th street, that is still going to remain, but it is going to be smaller. Where are you going to pick up the extra spaces? I think we had discussed at your office about talking to Dillion's about maybe using some of their parking space.

CLAIRE WILLENBERG: Which would be wonderful.

KENT COX: I think there are 125 or so parking spaces on the back side, what we are showing is essentially putting in a parking lot that goes in front of this. We are going to have to replace some parking space. The only way we are going to do that is either set up something with Dillions. They do not use this parking here at all that I can ever see. We do need to acquire additional land and put a parking lot east, we are in the process of looking at that.

KEITH LAWING: Across the front with a roundabout, I am going to see the busses lined up along there about 3:00 p.m., loading and unloading, is that one of your concepts there? You said you have about 50 parking spaces there?

KENT COX: Yes.

CLAIRE WILLENBERG: I know this is a pipe dream; to make this plan a perfect one to me would be to get rid of that parking. I know it is probably impossible. The traffic on 13th Street is awful, and is possibly a concern as far as safety. Vision-wise it would be nice to have a campus going across there, aesthetic value I have no clue where to put in the other parking to load and unload. If you could just have a drive that people could unload for the times, they use the auditorium and do some process for the parking lot to the east. I would be glad to get on a committee to try to raise some funds to find other houses to buy out, other than that I have no other ideas. It would be in a perfect world. I would love to have that gone because you have created this wonderful idea. I think your ideas are functionally better, aesthetically better, I think they are saving more historical aspects. Then we spoil it by dumping all that traffic right there in front. I do think there would be a lot of North High people who would help find other land, financially possibly if that is feasible.

KENT COX: We are in the process, when acquisition has to be done somewhat confidentially because prices seem to go up on you, we do not want to be held hostage by a property owner who would want to make a tremendous profit to sell. I think the district has normally paid market value maybe a little bit more than market value, or more than the appraised value and I think that is reasonable. We are in the process of purchasing property owned here and property owned here. There are a couple reasons for this, early expansion for parking. We had also had very limited athletic fields on this complex. We are going to be taking out part of the left field for this expansion, so we either change the rules of having to play around it or we try to do some relocation. Unfortunately, there is one significant home, here on Arkansas Avenue. They will need to be moved. There are a couple of real nice homes, and some are pretty run down. There are some possibilities here, that would allow us to relocate the tennis courts, possibly north, maybe even the track complex could be moved further north, but that would be very expensive to do that. We are looking at options.

CLAIRE WILLENBERG: Parking there would be nice, because you would have different directions, rather than jamming and slam on your brakes, this is my problem.

KENT COX: This would be more of an unloading, no parking, and visually pleasing. I can tell you the teachers biggest concern with this design is the loss of the parking lot. I think they are okay with the design, but the first question is what happens to my parking place. The teachers park back here and up here. We will have to figure out some place to put the parking.

CLAIRE WILLENBERG: The smoke stack is gone. Is there any possible budget for a overall architectural landscape design. I'm sure you don't have the funds to do the landscaping, but I think it is needed an overall freshening of the landscape. So many of the trees we have lost.

KENT COX: Actually building code requires us to do landscape. So we will be looking at that. The district is looking at that. All of our projects will be required to do some landscaping. I hope we can secure some of the beautification of the river back again, and certainly some areas in here need some assistance. The larger trees that have died, would be nice to replace them.

CLAIRE WILLENBERG: I am very impressed with the changes.

STAN SHELDEN: I think it makes a lot of sense. I think the new changes in reference to traveling patterns are good. I don't have a problem with the columns being out front either, because I am an architect. I think it could be a good possibility that he could do a nice addition. I don't have a problem with that addition being out in front does not bother me. I think that is fine. I like the idea that right through there is one concern, that what used to be a primary entrance to the auditorium, that does seem to be a little tight to me. It just seems to me to be a little back in an alley.

KENT COX: Again we are going to explore the idea of maybe making this open.

STAN SHELDEN: I think that would be a very positive addition.

KENT COX: Would you like to keep that original entrance? It is a pretty nice entrance to the building.

STAN SHELDEN: Even in the elevation it is a little tough to appreciate it. I think that would be nice to open that up a little bit more.

KENT COX: We may even explore the concept of, we talked about this being lower here, maybe we might lower that there to so that when you walk down you are not between two 24-foot poles.

STAN SHELDEN: Lets keep it bright.

CLAIRE WILLENBERG: Safety wise, even as a safety factor entering in the evening, it would be less dark and if it were, open more.

KENT COX: It makes sense. If we do that, we might also actually take part of this.

CLAIRE WILLENBERG: Is there anyway to do underground parking under the new additions right here is there?

KENT COX: We would not be able to do that.

LAWING: Kathy what are we being asked to do?

CLAIRE WILLENBERG: My motion would be that we accept their changes with enthusiasm, except for, with the exception with further study of the angle behind the commissary additional and the parking in front.

KEITH LAWING: Let the record show that the motion was made and seconded to the North High graduates, all in favor signify by saying aye, apposed nay. The motion carries.